

**CAPSULE SUMMARY**  
**Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse (AA-2208)**  
**St. John's College, Annapolis**

St. John's College constructed the Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse on College Creek in 1934. The wood frame building, standing two stories in height, provided a large open room on the second floor for college functions and parties. The first floor, opening onto the creek, housed the rowing facilities, including boats and sailing equipment. The building and the dock were renovated in 1989. To the south of the building is the Monument to French Soldiers and Sailors of the American Revolution, a high relief bronze marker dedicated in 1911. The Roman Bronze Works cast the relief to the designs of sculptor Joseph Maxwell Miller.

The Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse is a two-story wood frame building clad with wood shingles. The structure is covered with a front gable roof with exposed rafter ends and sheathed with asphalt shingles. The first floor houses the boats and rowing equipment; the second floor is a large banquet room with a covered porch looking over the water.

Inventory No. AA-2208

**1. Name of Property** (indicate preferred name)

(indicate preferred name)

historic Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse, St. John's College

other

## 2. Location

street and number   College Street   \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town	Annapolis	vicinity
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county Anne Arundel

**3. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

(give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name St. John's College

street and number 60 College Avenue, Box 2800

telephone 410/263-2371

city, town	Annapolis	state	MD	zip code	21404
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#### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel County Courthouse tax map and parcel

city, town	Annapolis	liber	folio
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## 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☒ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
 Other:

## 6. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Current Function</b>	<b>Resource Count</b>
_____ district	_____ public	_____ agriculture	Contributing      Noncontributing
<u>X</u> _____ building(s)	<u>X</u> _____ private	_____ commerce/trade	_____ 1 _____ buildings
_____ structure	_____ both	<u>X</u> _____ recreation/culture	_____ sites
_____ site		_____ religion	_____ structures
_____ object		_____ social	_____ 1 _____ objects
		_____ transportation	_____ 2 _____ Total
		_____ work in progress	
		_____ funerary	
		_____ government	
		_____ health care	
		_____ industry	
		_____ unknown	
		_____ vacant/not in use	
		_____ other:	
			<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>
			0

## 7. Description

Inventory No. AA-2208

### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one-paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse on College Creek was built in 1934 and renovated in 1989. It is a two-story wood frame building clad with wood shingles. The structure is covered with a front gable roof with exposed rafter ends and sheathed with asphalt shingles. The first floor houses the boats and rowing equipment; the second floor is a large banquet room with a covered porch looking over the water.

### Exterior Description:

The northwest (water side) elevation is located on the banks of and faces College Creek. The first story of the boathouse on this elevation is raised slightly above ground level, exposing the concrete block foundation. A wooden boat ramp, built during the summer of 1999 to replace the previous one in its place, descends from the main entry door to the water. A set of wooden steps flanks the landing of the ramp at the door. The facade of the building is divided into three bays, consisting of a central entry and flanking windows on the first story and a three-bay integrated porch on the second story. The first story features a central double hanging door and pairs of six-light casements to either side. The two leaves of the hanging door have two vertical recessed panels with six lights above. The casement windows have square-edged trim. The second story of the water side elevation features a three-bay open porch formed by Doric columns and a "Chippendale" wood railing spanning them. A round window is located in the gable end at attic level, above the open porch. The porch originally offered a deep pronaos, but has been largely filled in by glass walls that were built to enlarge the size of the interior banquet room. The use of glass helps to mitigate the effects of enclosing the porch.

The northeast elevation and land side of the building is similarly divided into three bays, including a central entry door and flanking windows on both stories. Here, however, because of the slope in terrain, the land side is entered on the second story, while the first story is built up against the hillside. The second story entry is reached by a contemporary wooden deck leading across the small riverbank ravine. The door, located on center, has three vertical panels below six light glass panes. Single 6/1 windows flank the central entry. Both the door and window trim is square edged.

The first story similarly features a central door opening and flanking windows. Here, however, the entry has a solid, six-paneled door and the windows are six-light casements. Again, the windows have square-edged trim.

The southeast elevation and northwest side walls are both six bays long with a fairly regular and balanced arrangement of windows lighting the interior. On the northwest elevation, the first story consists of four interior bays of paired 6-light casement windows and two end bays of single 6-light casements. The windows are set high above ground level and have square-edged trim. The second story has four windows towards--one single 6/1 window in the bay closest to the land side elevation and three pairs of 6/1 windows. The front section of the wall (towards the water side) is filled with a large rectangular opening that form the open side of the second-story porch. A Chippendale railing spans the wide opening, which is itself trimmed with square-edged wood trim.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AA-2208

Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse, St. John's College, Annapolis  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 7 Page 2

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The southeast side elevation is less symmetrical in its arrangement. On the first story, the four inside bays have pairs of six-light casement windows, while the two end bays have a single casement (towards land side) and a single six-paneled wood door towards the water side. The second story has a single 6/1 window in the bay closest to land side, then pairs of 6/1 windows flanking a second-story door. The second-story door has three vertical panels surmounted by six-light glass panes. Like on the opposite side wall, the front (water side) of this elevation has a large rectangular opening forming the open side of the porch. Several flights of contemporary wooden steps provide access to the various doors along this elevation.

### Interior Description:

The interior of the boathouse consists of the boat room on the first floor and a banquet room on the second floor. The boat room is divided into two bays by a row of concrete columns on center of the room and supporting a central ceiling beam. The room has narrow wood floorboards, furred out plywood walls and a dropped ceiling with banks of fluorescent lighting. Each bay has boat racks lining the walls, with an aisle between the boats and the central row of columns providing access to the boats. Work benches have been built up against the central row of columns, and the columns are used for hanging tools and other equipment. On center of the end wall, the sliding double wood doors leads directly to the water. A crank on the floor at the last column before the door was originally used to lift the boats to and from the boathouse and the water. During the summer of 1999, a new ramp was built which eliminated the need for this crank.

The second floor of the boathouse is a large, open space similarly divided into two bays by a central row of concrete columns and a ceiling beam. The room has narrow wood floorboards and a dropped ceiling with banks of fluorescent lighting, like in the boathouse. The room has been expanded from its original configuration by the removal of the original front wall and its extension in glass further forward. At the point of the extension, the side walls are also plate glass. Two sets of double glass doors lead out to the diminished porch.

The attic of the boathouse reveals the original roof rafter system, consisting of a common rafters and collar beams. The rafters abut a ridge pole and are supported by 2" x 4" struts placed at a diagonal. The attic floors have narrow wood floors. The roof sheathing boards are 8" wide.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. AA-2208

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Significance dates 1934-1989

Architect unknown

Specific dates 1934, 1989

Builder unknown

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

St. John's College constructed the Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse on College Creek in 1934. The wood frame building, standing two stories in height, provided a large open room on the second floor for college functions and parties. The first floor, opening onto the creek, housed the rowing facilities, including boats and sailing equipment. The building and the dock were renovated in 1989. To the south of the building is the Monument to French Soldiers and Sailors of the American Revolution, a high relief bronze marker dedicated in 1911. The Roman Bronze Works cast the relief to the designs of sculptor Joseph Maxwell Miller.

\*For a detailed history of St. John's College, refer to Maryland Historical Inventory Form, McDowell Hall (AA-675).

### History of Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse

During the Depression, the college experienced severe financial troubles. The board had invested heavily in Annapolis real estate, even mortgaging college buildings to afford additional investments. When the stock market crashed in 1929 and their investment opportunities evaporated, there was not enough money to meet operating expenses. Yet, rather than close the school, the board elected to again revamp the curricular and expand their educational ideal to attract a wider range of students. One element of the change was an even greater emphasis placed on athletic activities, including football, crew, sailing, tennis, track, and baseball. To aid in the expansion of these programs, the college erected a boathouse on College Creek in 1934. The building was named Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse.

Due to the slope of the site, and the building's location along College Creek, the second floor of the boathouse was reached via a wooden walkway on the southeast side. The open space provided the students with a meeting hall and party room. The first floor, opening northwest to the water, housed the boats and equipment. During the tenure of Franz Plunder, a sculptor whose wife was the Director of Adult Education at St. John's College, taught the students boat building in the boathouse.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AA-2208

Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse, St. John's College, Annapolis  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 2

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The interior of the building was renovated in 1989. Today, the boathouse is used as the headquarters for the sweep-oar rowing and sculling activities. The college has a fleet of sailboats, from 14-foot lasers to a 37-foot Herreschoff ketch, along with many rowing dinghies, canoes, and kayaks.

### Monument to French Soldiers and Sailors of the American Revolution

The Monument to French Soldiers and Sailors of the American Revolution, known as the French Monument, is located to the south of the boathouse along College Creek. The high relief bronze marker, designed in the classical style, was dedicated in 1911 to commemorate the contributions of the French in the struggle for American independence. It depicts a bronzed allegorical figure of Memory mounted on a pink granite stele with a gray granite base, the work of Baltimore sculptor Joseph Maxwell Miller. The monumental stele form is descended from the ancient Greek gravestone. The Roman Bronze Works, established in 1900 in New York City by Ricardo Bertelli, cast the bronze relief.<sup>1</sup>

The monument serves not only as a memorial, but also as a grave marker. During the American Revolution, between September 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 1781, nearly 4,000 French traveled through Annapolis on their way to Yorktown to aid the colonists in their fight for independence. From Annapolis, five frigates and nine transports took most of the men to the James River, while the remaining traveled overland to Williamsburg by wagon. Jean-Baptiste-Donatien de Vimeur, Comte Donatien de Rochambeau, along with General George Washington and Francois Joseph Paul, Marquis de Grasse-Tilly, attacked Yorktown, surrounded British Colonel Lord Cornwallis, and gained control of the American waters. Although the war continued until 1783, the battle at Yorktown played a major role in the American victory.

A number of the French soldiers died in Annapolis, contracting illnesses during their difficult march southward. The men are believed to have been laid to rest on the shores of College Creek, on property ultimately owned by St. John's College. Of the estimated 1,112 French who lost their lives in the American fight for independence, it is not known how many are buried on the campus of St. John's. Henry Marion, a professor at the Naval Academy, was the first to suggest a monument be erected to mark the graves of the unknown French. A brochure printed by St. John's College recounts Marion's travels to "Cherbourg when the body of John Paul Jones was removed from French soil and sent to the Naval Academy. Marion was touched by the care the French gave to the cemetery for American seamen who had been killed June 27, 1864, in a sea fight off Cherbourg between the U.S. sloop of war *Kearsarge* and the Confederate cruiser *Alabama*. It was time, Professor Marion felt, for a reciprocal act which would honor those French who had given their lives to the American cause."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Marcia M. Miller and Orlando Ridout V, editors, *Architecture in Annapolis: A Field Guide*. (Crownsville, MD: Maryland Historical Trust, 1998), p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> "French Monument: St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland," Pamphlet prepared by St. John's College.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AA-2208

Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse, St. John's College, Annapolis  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 3

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The Sons of the Revolution agreed to fund the memorial. The cornerstone was laid on March 26, 1906. Amelia Fowler, great-granddaughter of Comte de Grasse, placed the first bit of mortar under the stone, and Madame Jusserand, wife of the French Ambassador, laid a wreath. The marker was dedicated on April 18, 1911. The bronze memorial indicates the ceremony was held on April 19<sup>th</sup>, however, thus, documenting a change in schedules to accommodate that of President William Howard Taft, who came for the occasion with Ambassador Jean J. Jusserand. "At the dedication, Amelia Fowler and Count Rene de Chambrun, a descendant of Lafayette, pulled the canvas from the pink granite monument."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> "French Monument: St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland," Pamphlet prepared by St. John's College.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AA-2208

Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse, St. John's College, Annapolis  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 4

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### HISTORIC CONTEXT:

#### MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

**Geographic Organization:** Western Shore

**Chronological/Developmental Period(s):** Modern Period (1930-present)

**Historic Period Theme(s):** Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community  
Planning  
Social/Education/Cultural

**Resource Type:**

**Category:** Building

**Historic Environment:** Town

**Historic Function(s) and Use(s):** EDUCATION/College

**Known Design Source:** Unknown



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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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AA-2208

"A Brief History: St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland," Pamphlet prepared by St. John's College.

"French Monument: St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland," Pamphlet prepared by St. John's College.

McIntire, Robert Harry. *Annapolis Maryland Families*, Baltimore, MD: Gateway Press, Inc., 1980.

Murphy, Emily A. *A Complete and Generous Education: 300 Years of Liberal Arts, St. John's College, Annapolis.* Annapolis, MD, St. John's College Press, 1996.

Riley, Elihu S. *The Ancient City, A History of Annapolis in Maryland, 1649-1887.* Baltimore, MD: Clearfield Company, Inc., 1995.

Tilghman, Tench Francis. *The Early History of St. John's College.* Annapolis, MD: St. John's College Press, 1984.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of project area	<u>1 acre</u>	
Acreage surveyed	<u>33 acres</u>	
Quadrangle name	<u>Annapolis, MD</u>	Quadrangle scale <u>1:24,000</u>

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

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Beneficial-Hodson Boathouse is located on the campus of St. John's College, established at this site in 1784. The college is recorded on Tax Map 4-6, Parcel 458. It is bounded by College Avenue to the southeast, King George Street to the northeast, St. John Street to the southwest, and College Creek to the northwest.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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name/title	Laura Trieschmann and Kim Williams, Architectural Historians	April 22, 2000
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organization	E.H.T. Traceries, Inc.
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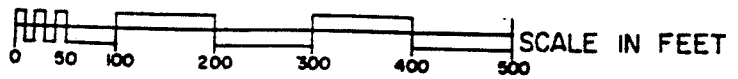
street & number	5420 Western Avenue
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city or town	Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815
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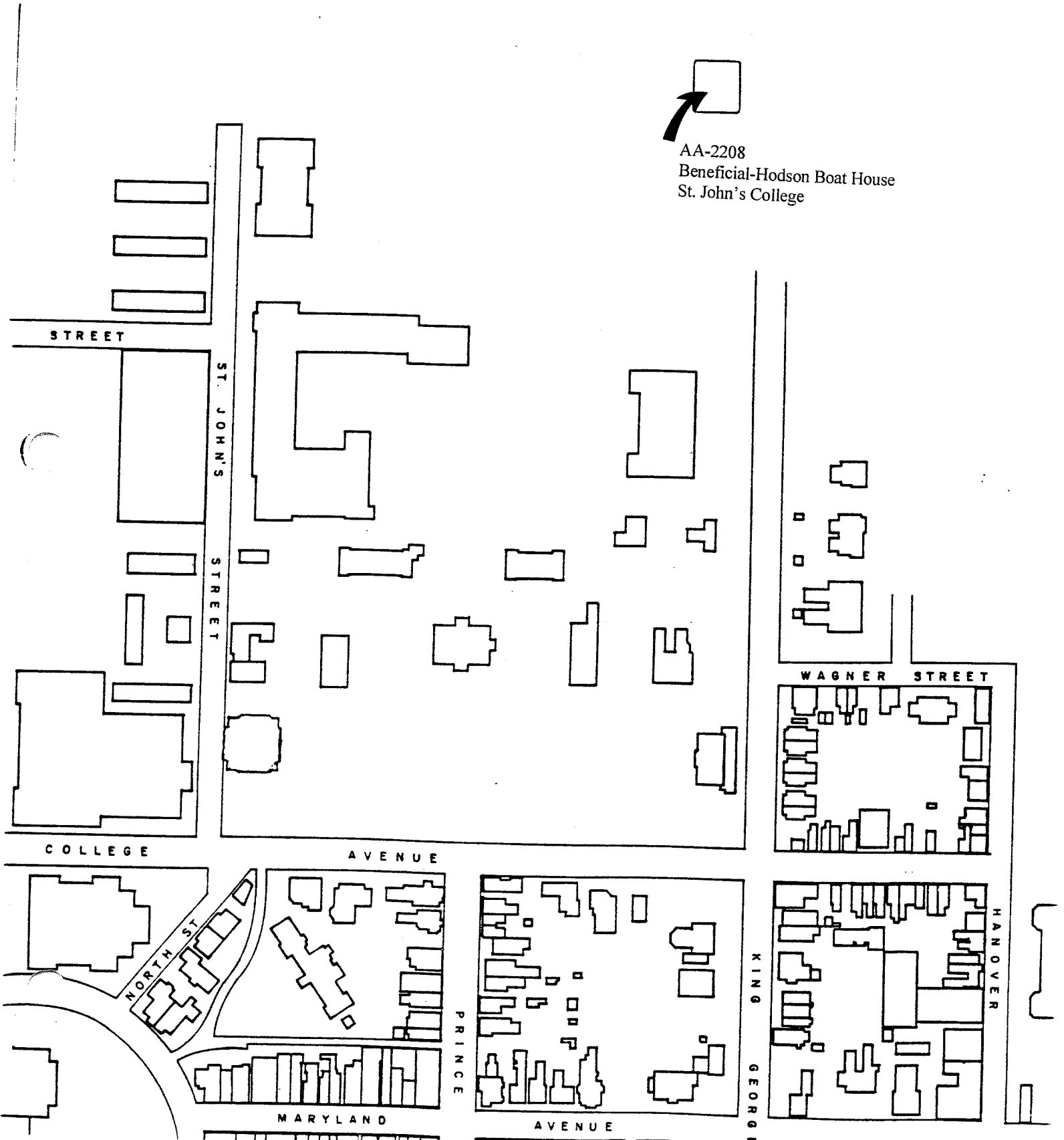
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032  
410-514-7600



AA-2208  
Beneficial-Hodson Boat House  
St. John's College





AA-2208

BOAT HOUSE

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

TRAILERIES

1/00

MARYLAND SHPO

WEST CORNER, LOOKING EAST

1 OF 9



AA-2208

BOAT HOUSE

ST. JOAN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

TRACERIES

1/00

MARYLAND SHPO

NORTH CORNER LOOKING WEST

2 OF 9



AA-2208

BOAT HOUSE  
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE  
ANNAPOLIS  
TRACERIES

1/00

MARYLAND SHPO  
NE ELEVATION LOOKING SOUTH

3 OF 9





AA-2208

BOAT HOUSE

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

TRACERIES

1/00

MARYLAND SHPO

EAST CORNER LOOKING NW

4 OF 9



AA-2208

BOAT HOUSE

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

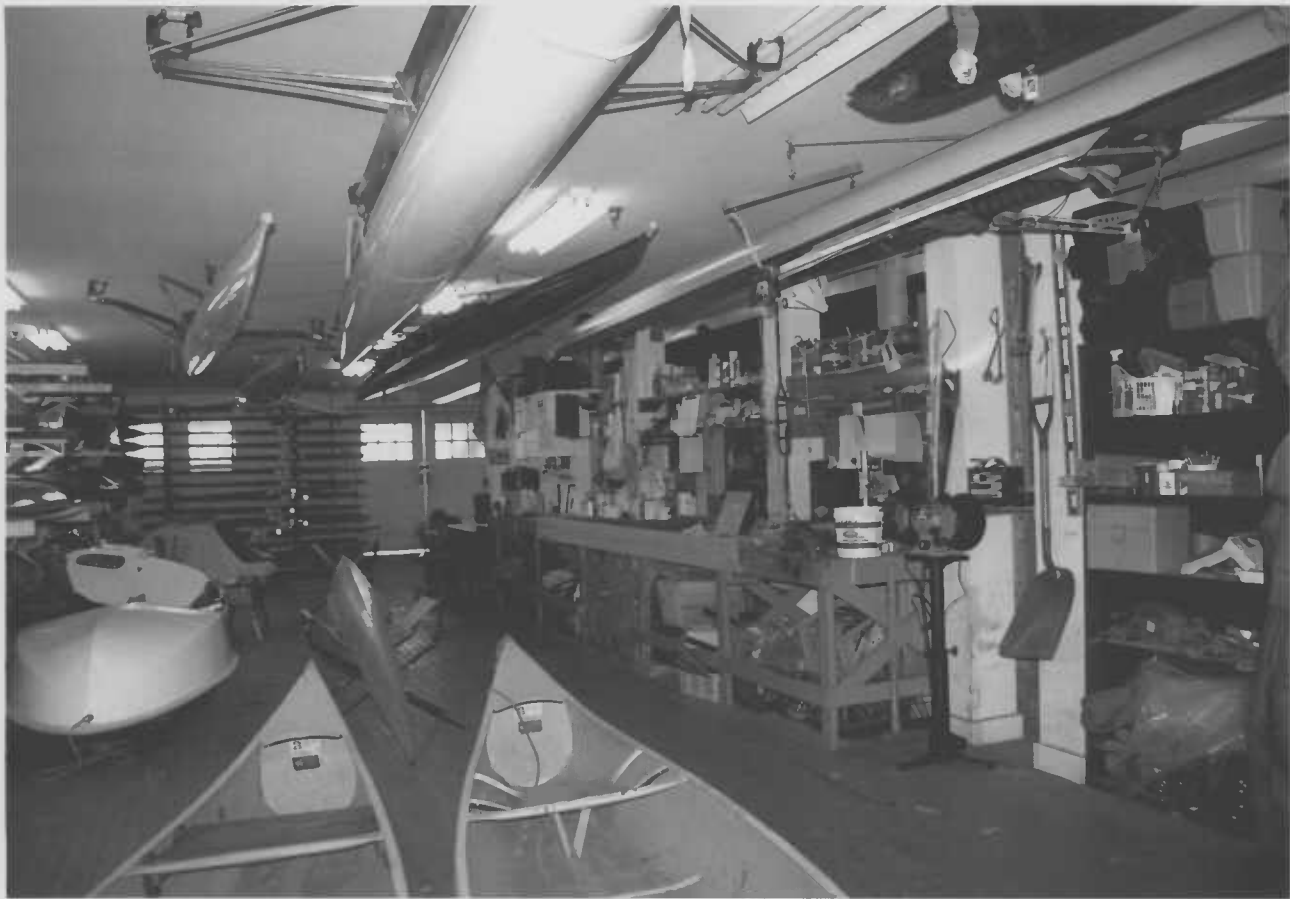
TRACERIES

1/00

MARYLAND SHPO

SECOND FLOOR LOOKING NW

5 OF 9



AA-2208

BOAT HOUSE

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

TRACERIES

1/00

MARYLAND SHPO

FIRST FLOOR LOOKING NORTH

6 OF 9



AA-2208

BOAT HOUSE

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

TRAILERIES

1/00

MARYLAND SHPO

FIRST FLOOR, LOOKING SOUTH

7 OF 9





AA-2208

BOAT HOUSE

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

TRACERIES

1/00

MARYLAND SHPO

ATTIC, LOOKING NW

8 OF 9



AA-2208

FRENCH MONUMENT AT BOAT HOUSE

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

TRACERIES

1/00

MARYLAND SHPO

LOOKING NW

9 OF 9